

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE  
WOODSTOCK TOWN COUNCIL  
HELD AT 7.30 PM ON TUESDAY 8 APRIL 2008  
IN THE MAYOR'S PARLOUR, WOODSTOCK TOWN HALL**

**PRESENT:**

Cllr C Carritt (Town Mayor)	
Cllr Mrs A Cooper (Deputy Mayor)	
Cllr T Airey	Cllr J Cooper
Cllr Mrs J Dunsmore	Cllr W R Edwards
Cllr T Gardiner	Cllr Mrs A Grant
Cllr Mrs S Hazell	Cllr Mrs E Jay
Cllr P Jay	Cllr I Lenagan
Cllr P Redpath	Cllr Mrs T Redpath
Cllr Mrs P Richardson	Cllr B Yoxall

**ALSO IN ATTENDANCE:**

Mr Howard Morris (Woodstock and Bladon News) and five members of the public.

The Town Mayor, Cllr C Carritt, circulated a proposed re-ordering of the Agenda, which by a consensus was agreed by Members at the meeting.

**WTC/339/07 APOLOGIES**

An apology for lateness was received from Cllr Mrs J Dunsmore and an apology for absence was received from County Councillor I Hudspeth.

**WTC/340/07 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

Cllr B Yoxall declared a Personal Interest in Agenda Item No. 29, Rent Reviews, as he was friends with the tenants of 6 Park Street.

Cllr Mrs A Grant declared a Personal Interest in Agenda Item No. 31, The Woodstock Bowls and Tennis Club, as her sister was a Social Member of the Club.

Cllr T Gardiner declared a Personal Interest in Agenda Item No. 31, The Woodstock Bowls and Tennis Club, as his wife was a Member of the Club.

Cllr I Lenagan declared a Prejudicial Interest in Agenda Item No. 23, Mayoral Chains.

**WTC/341/07 MINUTES**

The Minutes of the meeting of the Town Council held on Tuesday 11 March 2008 were signed as a correct record, subject to the following amendments:

Minute No. WTC/321/07

(b)(v) Community Centre – Ground Floor Room 2 – Replace the word “one” with the word “three”.

(b) (vii) Staff Costs – delete the word “Members”.

The Minutes of the Extraordinary meeting of the Town Council held on Tuesday 18 March 2008 were signed as a correct record subject to the following amendments:

Minute No. WTC/331/07 – Declarations of Interest – insert the word “garden” before the word “tenants”.

Minute No. WTC/333/07 – Local Development Framework – Replace the word “RESOLVED” with the words “There was a consensus”.

The Minutes of the Extraordinary Meeting of the Council held on Tuesday 1 April 2008 were signed as a correct record.

**WTC/342/07 CIVIC ANNOUNCEMENTS**

The Town Mayor, Cllr C Carritt, paid tribute to those Members who were not standing for re-election to the Council. Cllr R Edwards had been a Member for 34 years and had served as Town Mayor, CMfP, Chairman of Strategy Committee and was a leading member of the Woodstock in Bloom group.

Cllr I Lenagan had been on the Council for 16 or 20 years, had served as CMfP, had played a leading role in developing the Council’s financial strategy, and had been a major benefactor to the Council and the town.

Cllr Mrs S Hazell had been a diligent Member for four years, serving on various Committees and giving valuable advice on the refurbishment of the Town Hall and the Community Centre.

Cllr Mrs J Dunsmore had also served on the Town Council for four years, had worked on various Committees and had played a leading role in the disabled access area. She was now a District Councillor.

Cllr Mrs A Cooper had served as Town Clerk from 1974 to 1988, before re-joining as a Member in 2004. She had provided invaluable background information on many topics. Cllr Carritt paid particular tribute to her support and friendship in her role as Deputy Mayor.

Cllr Mrs Cooper, on behalf of the Council, thanked Cllr Carritt for all of his efforts in his two years as Town Mayor.

**WTC/343/07 ANNUAL TOWN MEETING**

The draft Minutes of the meeting of the Annual Town Meeting held on 18 March 2007 were received and matters arising there from were considered.

A Member was of the view that the word “overwhelmingly” should be added after the word “RESOLVED” in Minute 8, Open Forum. It was agreed that this could be considered when the Minutes were formally proposed for adoption at the next Annual Town Meeting in 2009.

Please refer to Minute WTC/357(c)/07 regarding the possible listing of the Old GWR Railway Station building.

**WTC/344/07 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION SESSION WITH RESPECT TO ITEMS ON THE AGENDA**

Mr Noam Bleicher spoke with regard to Agenda item No. 19, Woodstock Town Centre Bus Shelter Petition. He stressed the importance of the provision of a shelter for bus users from around the area, the provision that had been made in other market towns, and the need for bus users to be treated as favourably as motorists.

**WTC/345/07 WOODSTOCK TOWN CENTRE BUS SHELTER PETITION**

The Council received a letter from Mr Noam Bleicher of Bus Users UK, Oxford Branch, together with a Petition signed by approx. 100 people, regarding the Council’s decision to advise the County Council that the Town Council was opposed to the proposal to provide a bus shelter in the centre of

this heritage town on a cramped site. The Council also received letters from Mr Chris Baylis and Wake Up to Woodstock.

Some Members recalled that the decision to oppose the proposal had been based on safety grounds. Other Members considered that the design was not appropriate for this location, but a more sympathetic design might receive support. By a consensus it was agreed that this matter could be re-considered by the new Council, subject to the requirements of the relevant Standing Order being met.

**WTC/346/07 REVIEW OF OXFORD – CHIPPING NORTON / CHARLBURY BUS SERVICE**

The Council received an oral report from Cllr B Yoxall on the arrangements for the review of this service.

**WTC/347/07 THE WOODSTOCK BOWLS AND TENNIS CLUB**

Cllrs T Gardiner and Mrs A Grant had declared Personal Interests in this matter.

It was reported that the lease of the land from the Town Council to the Woodstock Bowls and Tennis Club was due to expire at the end of 2009. An Extraordinary General Meeting of the Club was due to be held on Tuesday 22 April. One item on the Agenda was a proposal that the Club move from being a private members' club to obtaining Community Amateur Sports Club status. An informal view had been obtained from Henmans, the Council's Solicitors, to the effect that this change in status would not necessarily have any affect on the Council's lease of the land to the Club.

Members noted that the Club had been a local club for local people. If the status of the Club was changing, then there would need to be a review of the peppercorn rent that was currently being charged.

It was MOVED by Cllr T Gardiner, seconded by Cllr B Yoxall

“Woodstock Bowls and Tennis Club (WB&TC) occupies Woodstock Town Council (WTC) land under a lease that commenced on 1<sup>st</sup> January 1989 for a term of 21 years. The parties to the Lease are WTC and Four Trustees. Rent payment is a peppercorn of £1.00p per annum. The lease terms and conditions and low rental payment are clearly designed to ensure that the facility is primarily for the benefit of the residents of Woodstock.

Further to the information received that the WB&TC is considering whether to apply for Community Amateur Sports Club (CASC) status WTC requests that the Clerk takes the following actions in order that WTC is prepared to respond to such a request:

1. If the EGM of the WB&TC on 22<sup>nd</sup> April 2008 votes in favour of conversion to a CASC the Clerk will provide a written report, if possible for the May or at the latest June meeting of WTC, detailing the implications, if any, for WTC property and the current WTC/WB&TC lease.

In particular the impact such a change of status would have on:

a) Property title and lease terms and conditions with particular reference to Clause 2d of the current lease relating to ownership and assignment of title

and

b) Membership profiles before and after conversion with particular reference to the First Schedule Part 1 of the current lease – that the facility is for “benefit of the inhabitants of Woodstock” and the Second Schedule Part 2 of the current lease which refers to “alterations to the rules of the Club” which limit playing opportunity for local residents.

2. The Clerk is instructed to write to the Trustees and remind them that, whilst Woodstock Town Council recognizes the important contribution that the Bowls and Tennis Club has made over the years to the Woodstock community, consent to occupy the facility is subject to compliance with the specific terms and conditions as detailed under the current lease. Failure to observe these terms and conditions would be a breach of the Lease and WTC would seek to remedy such a breach by appropriate means. Any proposals and/or decisions by the WB&TC to vary the Lease terms and conditions must, before being executed, be approved by WTC.”

A Member reminded the Council that the Club had reacted favourably in the past to suggestions as to how it could improve its services to local people. There was no obvious suggestion that a change in status would have any impact on the rules of the Club. Concern was expressed at the censorial tone of the Proposal. It had been pointed out that the Town Council had not been kept up-to-date with changes in the identity of the four Trustees but there was no requirement in the Lease for this to happen. There had been various changes to the lease over the past 12/15 years which were contained in correspondence.

Another Member noted that local people appeared to be disturbed by what was going on at the Club.

**RESOLVED** (By thirteen votes to two)

That the proposal set out above be adopted.

**WTC/348/07**    ***OUTSTANDING BUSINESS***

None.

**WTC/349/07**    ***COMMUNICATIONS***

None

**WTC/350/07**    ***QUESTIONS***

Cllr Mrs A Cooper

Can Councillors please be advised upon the following:

1. Progress in the application for the meadows to be registered with DEFRA for grants under the Higher Stewardship Scheme?
2. SLUICE REPAIR the proposed contractual arrangements for the repair of the sluice during the 08/09 financial year?
3. If the above work is to be supervised with the appropriate specification prepared by professional advisers? (It would appear that provision is contained within the financial regulations for the Clerk to engage such professional help if he considers this to be necessary).
4. What arrangements are in hand for application for grant assistance, e.g. from TOE? (It is my understanding that grant applications are only considered in February and September and that a fully worked up scheme together with estimates must be submitted before that date. Furthermore it is my clear understanding that retrospective applications are not considered).

By way of explanation can I please state that I believe if the major contract to repair the sluice is to proceed and to attract grant assistance it is essential that all preparatory work is completed and presented to Council for its consideration and authorization at the latest by the August meeting? Whilst I will not be a member at that time I do have a lasting interest in the meadows and am aware that the Clerk's work load will not allow sufficient time to oversee preparation of the necessary documentation without professional advice.

The Town Mayor, Cllr C Carritt, answered the question as follows.

1 Registration under the Higher Stewardship Scheme is still awaiting the completion of Rural Land Registration. This has proved to be a particularly lengthy process. However, as Nick Mottram has explained, the Higher Stewardship Scheme is only one of a number of routes for obtaining benefits for the Watermeadows. The work of the Green Gym has fulfilled many of the ambitions that were originally expected to be achieved under the Higher Stewardship Scheme. Also, it must be remembered that obtaining a grant from DEFRA places a commitment on the Town Council for a ten year period. It could be suggested therefore that registration under the Higher Stewardship Scheme is no longer required. However, it still remains the intention to complete both registrations.

2 Drafts of the necessary application form and plan have been submitted to the Environment Agency for their informal agreement. The contractor, BA Hull, and the Agency are in contact over the proposals. Once the Agency has indicated that all of the necessary plans and other information are in place, the formal application will be submitted. It is not anticipated that there will be any need to re-tender for this project. Once the formal application is submitted to the Environment Agency, BA Hull will be advised so that they are in a position to commence the works as soon as the consent is forthcoming. As previously advised, a meeting has taken place with Blenheim and they have provided advice and assistance in transporting sand bags etc to the site.

3 There has been no suggestion from the Environment Agency that our tender documentation is not satisfactory and therefore it is not anticipated that re-tendering will be required.

4 Application to TOE is awaiting the forgegoing and the receipt of planning permission which is required. Applications can be submitted in April, July, September and October and the conditions surrounding that are known.

#### ***WTC/351/07 REPORTS/PAPERS OF COMMITTEES, SUB-COMMITTEES AND WORKING PARTIES***

##### ***(a) Communications Sub-Committee***

The Council received the Minutes of a meeting of the Communications Sub-Committee held on Thursday 20 March 2008.

The Council unanimously congratulated those responsible for the production of the Spring Newsletter

##### ***(b) Woodstock Town Plan Steering Group***

The Council received the notes of a meeting of the Town Plan Steering Group held on Thursday 20 March 2008

##### ***(c) Report from the CMfP***

The Council received a report from the CMfP on the continuing facelift and other works at the Town Hall, works to the Park Street properties and recent events at the Community Centre. Members received at the meeting a summary of the expenditure on the external and internal repairs and redecorations at the Town Hall, which showed total expenditure of £46,838 against a budget of £47,000. By a consensus, the CMfP was congratulated on his work on this project.

A Member expressed her concern at the situation concerning the specification for the works to the roof of the Town Hall and the Town Clerk offered to copy the specification documents to her.

#### ***WTC/352/07 REPORTS FROM OFFICERS OF THE COUNCIL***

##### ***(a) Town Clerk***

Various items set out hereunder.

##### ***(b) Report of the Responsible Financial Officer – April 2008***

For items (i) – (iii) the Council noted that there were a number of outstanding items for inclusion in this financial year, year end adjustments in respect of debtors, creditors etc as well as journal entries to be made and these would lead to changes in the years figures being presented at this early stage.

(i) List of payments for March 2008

The Council received the list of payments for March 2008

(ii) Bank Reconciliation Statements (2) for March 2008

The Council received the Bank Reconciliation Statements for March 2008. Members expressed concern at the final variance figure of £67,391.

(iii) Summary and Detailed Income & Expenditure Statements for March 2008

The Council received the Summary and Detailed Income & Expenditure Statements for March 2008.

(iv) Community Centre – Ground Floor Office 2.

The proposed new tenant wished to proceed and the RFO was now to obtain references before instructing solicitors to proceed. A quotation had been received for replacement of carpet, as previously authorised by Members, at a cost of £482 plus VAT.

**RESOLVED**

That the sum of £482 be vired from the Community Centre Car Park Repairs budget to pay for the carpet replacement bill.

(v) Internal Control, Internal Audit and Risk Assessment Systems

Members received and considered the report of the Working Group.

**RESOLVED**

That the report of the Working Party be commended to the new Council for adoption and action thereafter.

(vi) Internal Auditor fees

It was reported that a letter had been received from the Internal Auditor advising of his intention to increase fees for the current year from £25 per hour to £27.50 per hour. This was the first increase since January 2006.

(vii) Management Information

The Council received and considered a report of the Chairman of the Finance Committee and the RFO regarding the format of future management information reporting.

**RESOLVED**

That future monthly income and expenditure reporting be in the following format, subject to the incorporation of the current month's budget figure as soon as practicable:

Phased – with option for current month actual

Actual Current Month / Actual Year to Date / Budget Year to Date  
Variance Year to Date / Annual Budget / Funds Available

(viii) Items of expenditure 2007/8 not completed in the financial year

The Council received and considered a report / schedule from the Responsible Financial Officer detailing items of expenditure budgeted for the year 2007/2008, where the work had not been completed and the respective Members had requested that the funds be held over on an earmarked to enable works to be completed in the year 2008/9, in addition to expenditure already contained in the 2008/9 Budget.

**RESOLVED** (By fourteen votes to two)

That the funds set out in the report be held over to 2008/09 as proposed.

(ix) Gas and Electricity – Buying Consortium

The Council received an up-dating report from the RFO..

**RESOLVED**

That authority be delegated to the RFO in consultation with the Chairman of Finance Committee and the CMFP to resolve this matter.

**WTC/353/07 SEALING OF DOCUMENTS**

None

**WTC/354/07 CHRISTMAS LIGHTS**

The Council received and considered a report from the RFO and a report from Cllr C Carritt detailing the expenditure and income in respect of Christmas Lights for 2007/08. There was a divergence of opinion as to the expenditure figure that had been agreed for this scheme and evidence was produced for both points of view. After a protracted discussion it was agreed by consensus that the meeting do move on to next business.

**WTC/355/07 PROPOSALS OR RECOMMENDATIONS**

Cllr Mrs A Grant

Cllr Mrs Grant points out that at the February meeting she was not at all satisfied with the Christmas Lights expenditure. At a previous meeting, the Town Mayor mentioned the fact that the new LED lighting could be left in the trees. This point was not really debated and considering most of the tree have been lopped during the past few months it was probably as well on this occasion the lights were removed.

A considerable amount of money could be saved by leaving the lights in situ and would go towards closing the gap in the Christmas Lights Budget. There is however the chance of a string of lights being stolen or damaged but replacement of such a loss would still prove cheaper than annual removal and re-decking.

I would like to propose that in the interest of budgetary savings the Christmas lights be left in situ in future years.

## **RESOLVED**

That, subject to obtaining the approval of the Highway Authority, the above Proposal be adopted and implemented.

Cllr R Edwards

Last year Henmans gave to the Town Council a very interesting Report of the Charity Commissioners into all the endowed charities in Oxfordshire in the 19th century. I would like to propose that this volume should go on loan to Woodstock County Library where it would be available for reference. I will bring the Report to the meeting.

## **RESOLVED**

That the Proposal be adopted.

### ***WTC/356/07 PLANNING APPLICATION***

Cllr Mrs J Dunsmore declared that she could not participate in the discussion or decisions the application before the Council as she was a member of the Planning Committee of West Oxfordshire District Council and might be involved in the determination of the application in the future.

Ref: 08/0426/P/FP

Erection of conservatory to rear elevation with porch to front elevation.

4 Hensington Close

Mr Andrew Hopcraft

Decision: No comment.

### ***WTC/357/07 PLANNING FOR THE FUTURE***

#### **(a) Consultation On Issues And Options**

It was reported that a letter had been received from the District Council on the above matter together with the following documents which the District Council has published for consultation purposes:  
Core Strategy Issues and Options (with accompanying questionnaire)  
Site Allocations Issues and Options (with accompanying questionnaire)  
The closing date for the receipt of views was Monday 12 May.

## **RESOLVED**

- (i) (by thirteen votes to two) that, with regard to the Site Allocation Issues and Options, the Town Council is not willing to comment on the proposed sites at the present time because it does not want to get into the detail of supporting any;
- (ii) that consideration of the Core Strategy Issues and Options be deferred to an Extraordinary meeting of the Council to be held on Tuesday 22 April 2008.

#### **(b) Engagement of Planning Consultant**

At the meeting of the Council held on 11 March 2008, in discussing the Local Development Framework, it was resolved that Mr Nick Lyzba of Jonathan Philips Partnership be retained as the Council's specialist adviser on this matter and that the District Council be advised accordingly.

It was reported that Mr Lyzba was willing to act for the Town Council, but he had pointed out that he had been retained as the Planning Consultant for Berkley Homes in respect of the Youngs Garage Site and therefore could not act for the Council on that specific issue.

**RESOLVED**

That Mr Lyzba still be invited to represent the Council in respect of Planning for the Future.

(c) Listing of the Old GWR Railway Station Building

Further to consideration of this matter at the Annual Town Meeting, the District Council's Conservation Officer had advised that the developers had commissioned a survey and appraisal of the surviving old station buildings. This had concluded that what survived, following the garage alterations etc. was not of listable quality. The District Council had considered the report, and did not disagree with the conclusion. However, if the Town Council disagreed, it could take up the matter direct with English Heritage.

**RESOLVED** (By thirteen votes to one)

That the Property Group do investigate this matter, to include inviting English Heritage to give a view as to whether the old railway station is of listable standard.

**WTC/358/07 APPOINTMENT OF ADMINISTRATIVE ASSISTANT**

It was reported that, following interviews undertaken by Deputed Members and the Town Clerk, Mrs Zita Lewis had been appointed as the new Administrative Assistant, and had commenced her duties.

**WTC/359/07 AGE DISCRIMINATION**

Cllr Mrs A Cooper had drawn attention to an article that appeared in the Oxford Times business/legal supplement. Cllr Mrs Cooper had requested that Members be brought up-to-date with the current provisions currently adopted as policy together with recommendations for any future action.

Members recalled Council's previous consideration of this matter and it was

**RESOLVED**

That the Town Clerk submit a further report to the Council.

**WTC/360/07 SPRING NEWSLETTER**

It was reported that the Newsletter had been produced and was in the process of being distributed.

**WTC/361/07 EXHIBITION OF WALLHANGINGS, SATURDAY 22 MARCH**

It was reported that attendance had been badly affected by the inclement weather.

**RESOLVED**

That the proposal by the Oxfordshire Museum to add a £1.50 commission on top of the price of £5 for selling Wall Hangings DVDs be referred to the Wall Hangings Trust for consideration.

**WTC/362/07 WOODSTOCK AGRICULTURAL & HORTICULTURAL ASSOCIATION**

**RESOLVED**

That this photograph be added to the Town Council's archives.

**WTC/363/07 MAYORAL CHAINS**

Cllr I Lenagan had declared a Prejudicial Interest in this matter. He left the room and took no part in the discussion or the determination of the matter.

The Council received and considered a report on this matter.

**RESOLVED**

- (a) that the decision of the Town Council taken in 2001 for the engraving on the rears of the Chains of Office of the Lenagan family acknowledgement be undertaken, such work to be funded by Cllr I Lenagan;
- (b) that the Council's thanks to Cllr Lenagan be recorded.

**WTC/364/07 EXCLUSION OF THE PUBLIC AND PRESS**

**RESOLVED**

That in view of the special or confidential nature of the business about to be transacted, it is advisable in the public interest that the public be temporarily excluded and they are instructed to withdraw.

**WTC/365/07 WEED SPRAYING CONTRACT 2008/10**

It was reported that quotations had been invited from three companies for the contract for the eradication of weeds on kerblines, channels, highway and paved areas for a three year period commencing 1 April 2008, as previously agreed by Council.

It was reported that quotations had been received from two companies. The results were as follows:

Companies (in alphabetical order)

Charlton Environmental Limited

Complete Weed Control

Quotations (in ascending order)

£360 per application.

£550 per application.

The quotation from Charlton Environmental Limited in the sum of £360 per application, being the least expensive of the two, had been accepted.

**WTC/366/07 PROVISION OF BLINDS, TOWN HALL**

It was reported that quotation had been invited from three companies for the supply and fitting of blinds at the Town Hall, as previously agreed by Council.

It was reported that three quotations had been received. The results were as follows:

Companies (in alphabetical order)

The Curtain Shop, Oxford

Denis Green, Witney

Home Sweet Home, Kidlington

Quotations (in ascending order)

Unable to meet specification

£1,869 incl VAT

£2,303.60 incl VAT

The quotation from The Curtain Shop, in the sum of £1,869 incl VAT, had been accepted.

**WTC/367/07 COMMUNITY CENTRE – ROOM 3 FIRST FLOOR**

The Council received a report from the Responsible Financial Officer regarding the decision of the current tenant to give three month's notice of his intention to vacate the premises.

**RESOLVED**

That Breckon and Breckon be approached to accept instructions to commence the marketing of the office immediately.

**WTC/368/07 RENT REVIEWS – 24 MARKET PLACE AND 6 PARK STREET**

The Council received a report from the Responsible Financial Officer regarding the up-to-date position on the rent reviews for these premises. Even though the tenant of 24 Market Place wished to leave the premises (Minute WTC/369/07 refers), Mark Baker had advised that the rent review should proceed.

**WTC/369/07 24 MARKET PLACE**

It was reported that the tenant of 24 Market Place wished to terminate the lease. It was noted that the tenant would have to find a new tenant before the Council would agree to this. It had been pointed out that the Council could sympathetically review an extension to the term of the lease for a potential new tenant, provided that its costs were covered, if this helped the assignment to take place.

The meeting rose at 10.15p.m.

Signed..... Date.....